

HSC Interview

REVIEW STAFF
75-3091

*file:
narrative*

24 September 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Interview by Ms. Emily Sheketoff, Staff Member,
House Select Committee on Intelligence

1. The subject interview took place at Ms. Sheketoff's request at 1300 hours, Wednesday, 10 September 1975, in the Select Committee's offices in the Rayburn Building. Sheketoff had previously informed the CIA Review Staff that the interview would be informal (without my being sworn in) and concerned exclusively with my detail to the Office of National Narcotics Intelligence (ONNI), Department of Justice, from November 1972 to March 1973. This indeed proved to be the case.
2. Sheketoff's questions focused on the issue of how worthwhile my detail to ONNI had been. She explained that the Committee Staff is examining the efficiency in general of detailing intelligence officers to other agencies and that for the moment she is examining such detailing in the area of foreign narcotics intelligence.
3. In responding to the questions I indicated that in my opinion the detail to ONNI had not been very productive. ONNI had had great difficulties in getting organized and even in locating office space, I explained. During its rather brief existence it was unable to fulfill any of its principal missions. The research component, to which I was assigned, never managed to get off the ground. Staffed mainly with young and relatively inexperienced people, it was tasked at the outset to do a major study, a worldwide survey of the cocaine problem. Working under a short deadline and relying on a number of contributions from other agencies, ONNI eventually produced a report which in final draft the White House judged was not acceptable for publication.

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4. I was not in a position, Sheketoff was informed, to make any very substantial contribution to ONNI's fledgling effort during this short-lived detail. Formally instructed to report to the supervisor of the liaison unit, I was given a desk in the research component with the understanding I would provide some assistance to the cocaine project. At the same time I was to serve as the channel for most of the substantive requests ONNI levied on the Agency. In the research component I was given some draft chapters of the cocaine study to review and then provide advice to the drafting analysts. These duties left me considerable spare time which was used to acquire general background on the cocaine problem.

5. I told Sheketoff that probably several factors helped to explain the limited use ONNI had made of my detail, including: an apparent desire to prove they could produce on their own; a seeming reluctance to take non-ONNI people into their confidence; and a lack of strong guidance from top level management. In any case, I added, by March 1973 this detail was abruptly terminated at ONNI's initiative.

6. Sheketoff then asked whether political concerns -- she cited the alleged ambition of Mr. Sullivan, the head of ONNI to become FBI Director -- had affected the quality of ONNI's overall performance. I replied that I had surmised that this was probably the case and also that political distractions in the White House at the time might have made it difficult for the Administration to focus on the narcotics problems. These speculations, I emphasized, were based solely on what I had read in the newspapers because at no time was I privy to ONNI policy deliberations. This prompted the interviewer to ask if I believed any organization set up to centrally coordinate narcotics intelligence could have been successful. I replied affirmatively, with the qualification that this would presume powerful and sustained White House backing, especially in view of interagency jurisdictional rivalries.

7. Sheketoff also wanted to know if I had discussed ONNI's progress, or lack thereof, with CIA colleagues while on the detail. In my affirmative response it was explained that the Agency was naturally concerned about ONNI's progress because it welcomed additional efforts in the foreign narcotics intelligence field. It was because CIA wanted ONNI

to succeed in its research, I believed, that I was detailed to ONNI in the first place. Prior to the detail, I said, the Agency instructed me not to become involved in any way in ONNI's domestic intelligence activities.

8. As I was the first person associated with narcotics intelligence with whom Sheketoff had talked, much of the discussion was devoted to clarifying basic matters of intelligence organization, practices, and production. Among other things, I elaborated on the different functions of the collection and analytical components in CIA, noting that I had had virtually no exposure to CIA operations to collect foreign narcotics intelligence.

STATINTL 9. Toward the end of the interview Sheketoff asked for the names of other persons familiar with foreign narcotics intelligence. I suggested she might consult the following: [redacted] of CIA, John Parker and James Ludlum of the Drug Enforcement Agency, Department of Justice, and Egil Krogh, formerly on the White House Staff. The interviewer also asked for the names of other CIA employees who had transferred or been detailed to other agencies with interests in narcotics intelligence. I could recall only two: [redacted] both of whom had transferred to ONNI.

STATINTL

10. This interview, which lasted about an hour, was thoroughly businesslike and pleasant. I found the interviewer to be both courteous and unassuming.

STATINTL

[redacted]
Deputy Special Assistant
to the Director, Economic Research

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